

January 14, 1976

Dr. John B. Robbins  
Director  
Division of Bacterial Products  
Bureau of Biologists  
Food and Drug Administration  
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Dear Dr. Robbins,

This is in response to your inquiry about Dr. P. H. Munkel in connection with her proposed appointment as a visiting scientist in your division.

I was fortunate to be able to have Dr. Munkel in my laboratory for a period of 18 months at the time when the department here at Stanford was first being organized - I realize that this was indeed 15 years ago. She came here already having had some experience in microbiology - particularly the serology of the enteric group. During her time here she became an accomplished bacterial geneticist and has continued to do superb work at the interface of basic microbial genetics and its applications to disease-implication problems in the microbiology of Salmonella and related organisms. I believe that she is regarded as a major figure in research in that area.

As indicated in her bibliography, she has also been involved in a number of other research programs in infectious disease. When I was visiting WHO recently, I was interested to notice her name prominently mentioned in connection with their recent reviews of the standardization of meningococcal vaccines. During the last few years she is evidently re-orienting her interests more and more in the direction of the scientific foundations of pediatric vaccination, a field that I feel deserves a very high priority for the rationalization of approaches to world health.

In the development of these interests she may well be influenced by the equally brilliant development of her husband's career - where he has indeed played a major role in the development of contemporary concepts of the functions of B and T cells in immunity.

It may summarize my very high appreciation of Dr. Munkel to say that I would gladly welcome her back into my own laboratory at any time.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg  
Chairman, Department of Genetics